

**Notice of Proposed Action and Opportunity to Comment
Wood Gulch Mineral Exploration Project
USDA Forest Service**

**Mountain City Ranger District
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest**

The Mountain City Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest is preparing an Environmental Assessment under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) on Western Exploration, LLC's (Western) Wood Gulch Exploration Project. The Project is located north of the Independence Mountains and east of the Bull Run Mountains in northern Elko County, approximately 70 miles north of Elko, Nevada. The Project is located on National Forest System (NFS) land administered by the United States Forest Service (USFS) in Sections 12-14, 23-26, 35, and 36, in T44N, R53E, and in Sections 7, 18, 19 and 30, T44N, R54E, MDBM, Elko County, Nevada.

Western plans to conduct mineral exploration activities in the project area in a phased manner over a period of ten years. Exploration activities would include the temporary construction of exploration roads and drill sites, reconstruction of previously reclaimed roads, maintenance of existing roads, and the utilization of overland travel routes. Drill holes are estimated to range in depth from 200 to 3,000 feet with the majority of drill holes being less than 1,500 feet deep. Exploration activities are estimated to disturb approximately 100 surface acres within a 4,800 acre Project Area.

Western is proposing 21 drill holes during their first Phase activities, resulting in approximately ten acres of associated surface disturbance. Phase-1 activities would include the use of existing roads, construction of new exploration roads, drill sites and sumps, and the utilization of overland travel routes and laydown areas. Subsequent phases would consist of similar activities totaling approximately 90 acres of surface disturbance. Western estimates 30 acres of drill pad disturbance and 70 acres of road disturbance over the ten years project period. Detailed location of surface disturbance for subsequent phases cannot be specified at this time because the locations of future activities would be based on results from the previous phased activities.

Reclamation techniques would include concurrent reclamation to minimize the total project disturbance at any one time. Reclamation would consist of recontouring to the approximate original contours and reseeding with a USFS approved certified weed-free seed mix. It is anticipated that final reclamation would be completed within three years of project completion. The detailed proposed action description and additional information about the project are available for review at Mountain City Ranger District Office from Douglas Powell, Mountain City District Geologist, 2035 Last Chance Rd., Elko, Nevada 89801; phone (775) 778-6129, fax (775) 778-6167, email johnpowell@fs.fed.us.

How to Comment and Timeframe

Individuals and organizations wishing to be eligible to object must meet the information requirements of 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B.

It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period. Only those who submit timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project during a public comment period established by the responsible official are eligible to file an objection under §218.

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted for 30 calendar days following the publication of this notice in the Elko Daily Free Press. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this analysis. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates or time frame information provided by any other source. The regulations prohibit extending the length of the comment period.

Written comments must be submitted to the Responsible Official for this project (Wendy Fuel, Mountain City District Ranger), 2035 Last Chance Rd., Elko, Nevada 89801; phone (775) 738-5171, fax (775) 778-6167; or you may hand-deliver your comments during normal business hours from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays, to 2035 Last Chance Rd., Elko, Nevada. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc) to this email address: comments-intermtn-humboldt-toiyabe-mtnclty@fs.fed.us. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to a comment, a verification of identity will be required for objection eligibility. If using an electronic message, a scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

For objection eligibility each individual or representative from each entity submitting timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request.

Additional Information

The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of Notice of Proposed Action and Opportunity to Comment in the Elko Daily Free Press (Newspaper of Record).

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this Project and will be available for public inspection and will be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act.